

This webpage provides style guidance for potential contributors to **Army Communicator** magazine.

Shortcuts to topics this page:

- [The Army writing standard](#)
- [Style \(general guidance\)](#)
- [Article sections](#)
- [Clarity index](#)
- [Writer's guide to style](#) (specific guidance)

Related webpages/topics:

General writer's guidance:

- [How to submit an article](#)
- [Notes on "department" updates](#)
- [Book reviews](#)
- [References](#)

The Army writing standard

Studying this style manual is essential before submitting a manuscript to **Army Communicator**, as it outlines the Army's writing standard and **AC**'s style guidance.

First, writers should note that with the obsolescence of Army Regulation 600-70, The Army Writing Program, and AR 360-81, **The Army Command Information Program**, a gap was created in the Army's magazine-style guidance. AR 600-70 was consolidated into AR 25-50, **Preparing and Managing Correspondence**. (Especially Section IV, Paragraphs 1-43 through 1-46; see also Appendix B, style practices.) AR 360-81 was consolidated with AR 360-1, **The Army Public Affairs Program**, which in style matters refers to **The Associated Press Stylebook**. The writing standards expressed in AR 25-50 apply to **Army Communicator** manuscripts, but much of the style does not apply -- AR 25-50 is more appropriate for Army correspondence, not Army journalism. **The AP Stylebook**, of course, is geared to civilian journalism, but it's often more appropriate as a style manual for **AC** than AR 25-50. Therefore **AC** style is unique; it's not quite AR 25-50 and it's not exactly **AP Stylebook**, although **AP Stylebook** usage is sometimes preferred over AR 25-50. This style manual specifies below where AR 25-50 Appendix B style practices do not apply.

We recommend study of Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-67, Effective Writing for Army Leaders in addition to study of this style manual. DA PAM 600-67 has a pithy presentation of the Army writing standard and style rules in its Chapter 3, Paragraphs 3-1 and 3-2.

Portions of AR 25-50 and DA PAM 600-67 will be quoted or paraphrased in this style manual.

The Army's writing standard (AR 25-50, Paragraph 1-10, and DA PAM 600-67, Paragraph 1-4) is simple.

"Department of the Army writing will be clear, concise and effective. ... Writing that is effective and efficient can be understood in a single rapid reading and is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics and usage." -- AR 25-50, Paragraph 1-10; see also AR 25-50 Paragraph 1-44 (Section IV on effective writing and correspondence: the Army writing style). "Good Army writing is clear, concise, organized and right to the point." -- DA PAM 600-67, Paragraph 1-4.

This standard of course applies to the Signal Regiment's professional-development magazine. Army Communicator often publishes very technical information, but we share the same goal and vision as the Army writing standard. Good Army writing, no matter how technical the information, is clear, concise, organized and to the point.

To meet the writing standard, follow AR 25-50 Paragraph 1-44 and 1-45, or DA PAM 600-67, Paragraphs 3-1 and 3-2. The essential requirements are to place your main point at your article's beginning and to use the active voice. More discussion of this follows.

Style (general guidance)

One of the most important concepts to master is expressed several ways: put your bottom line first, hook your reader, make it relevant to him/her. DA PAM 600-67 lists this concept first among its seven style techniques in Paragraph 3-1 and hammers the idea home again in Paragraph 3-2. AR 25-50 says "focus

first on the main point" (Paragraph 1-45) and "open with a short, clear purpose statement" (Paragraph 1-46).

An AC writer must establish his/her reason for writing the article -- and give the reader a reason for reading it -- in the article's first or second paragraph. The Army calls this reason the "bottom line," but in journalism it's also the writer's technique of showing the reader what the article means to him/her and/or how it affects him/her. Journalists/editors call this technique "showing relevance." Relevance is a powerful "hook" into an article. The AC editor will be looking for the relevance hook at the article's beginning, so conquer this concept.

It's always appropriate to nail down for the reader your article's relevance to him/her right at the beginning, then place your recommendation, conclusion or most important information next. But what if your recommendation/conclusion should also be at the end? Then summarize and provide your recommendation/conclusion at the end in different words; this is one place Army journalism standards will vary from correspondence standards. Each article should have a strong ending. (See next section.) The second "essential requirement" in the Army's writing standard and a major style factor is to write concise sentences expressed in the active verb voice. The passive voice is indirect and unfocused, and often hides the doer of the action, as DA PAM 600-67 says, whereas the active voice is direct, natural and forceful. As Paragraph 1-44, AR 25-50, says, the standard English sentence order of subject-verb-object is best.

Writing in the active voice emphasizes the doer of the action; shows who or what does the action in the sentence, or puts the doer before the verb; makes sentences clearer; and shortens sentences (AR 25-50, Para. 1-44). Eliminating passive voice can reduce a piece of writing by about 20 percent.

To recognize (and get rid of) the passive voice, look for one of the eight forms of "to be" plus the past participle of a main verb (am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been), and a main verb usually ending in -en or -ed. Example: is requested, were eaten, was completed. To fix the sentence construction, put the doer of the sentence as the subject. For example, rather than write "The PT test was passed by Jones" (passive), write "Jones passed the PT test" (active voice; the doer, Jones, is before the verb).

The specific style techniques in AR 25-50 Paragraph 1-45 and DA PAM 600-67 Paragraph 3-1 apply to **AC** writing:

- Avoid a profusion of adjectives and adverbs. Write short sentences – an average of 15 or fewer words. Vary sentence length.
- Use short words (three syllables or fewer). Yes, AC is a technical journal and therefore sometimes a "big word" is necessary – very well, use the big word, explain it/define it and refer to it thereafter in a shortened or simplified form.
- Write short paragraphs, one main idea/concept to a paragraph. AR 25-50 says "no more than 10 lines"; DA PAM 600-67 Paragraph 3-1 says "no more than one inch deep," with few exceptions.
- Avoid clichés and Army or Signal jargon.
- Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Use "I," "you" and "we" as subjects of sentences instead of "this office," "this headquarters," "this command," "all individuals" or "this writer."
- As much as possible, avoid sentences beginning with "It is," "There is" or "There are."

Short words, sentences and paragraphs will create more simplified writing. This is not an attempt to insult someone's intelligence; your reader's comprehension of your article will be greater if you write shorter, more direct words, sentences and paragraphs.

Suggested article titles should be short, to the point and descriptive. These may be "catchy" as long as they're not trite.

Clearly separate each major section of your article (AR 25-50, Paragraph 1-46, c[3]). AC uses subheads, which are two to three words (at most) summarizing or introducing a major section, to do this. The jist of the Army writing standard and style guidance is the same as Army journalism standards: put your reader first. Make your article easy to read and stimulating. Use the conversational style, injecting some personality into the article. Use contractions and simple sentences to achieve this. Engage your reader.

We may edit your title and manuscript (grammar, syntax, sentences, paragraphs and other writing structures) to comply with the Army writing standard. We also edit to conform to AC style. However, you should turn in a manuscript written to the Army writing standard and free of errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Article sections

Lead

The bottom-line-first/hook/relevance should occur in the article's lead. As a journalism instructor might say, your article's first words, first sentence, first paragraph should all "count." These establish your subject, set the article's tone, attract attention and guide your reader into what follows. These first sentences, this first paragraph or two, are called the article's lead – it's important to take some pains with them. The lead should captivate or "hook" readers in the first line or two, letting them know why they should take the time to read the article (relevance).

Feature leads (most of the articles AC receives are features) are of several types: narrative, direct address (uses "you"), teaser, "freak" (unusual lead, such as a poem, play on words, etc.), question, quote, description, summary or combination. Use the lead appropriate to your article.

Bridge and body

The bridge is usually a one-, two- or three-sentence paragraph between the article's lead and main body. The bridge should back up or add information to the lead and link the lead to the body of the story. The body should develop the story and continue the lead's mood or tone. The body should have a single focus and not sidetrack into other topics. (Supporting information that will help your reader understand your topic better can be placed in a "sidebar.")

Use transitions throughout the body -- from paragraph to paragraph, section to section -- to maintain your article's flow.

Opinions should be well-supported with examples.

Statistics should be translated into terms the reader can understand, that have meaning and can be visualized. Example of what not to write: "Six thousand people die every year on America's highways."

Example of what to write: "About 170 people die every day" or "Enough people die every year to fill Yankee Stadium." Show the readers; don't cite dry facts alone.

Ending

The conclusion of article should be equal, or nearly equal, in importance to the lead.

The article's conclusion should summarize the story; wrap up any loose ends; tie back to an idea, key word or quote planted earlier in the story; present a surprise to the reader (called a "stinger" ending); or combine any of these methods. Whatever conclusion you choose, it should be appropriate to the type of article you've written.

If the article is an opinion piece where the reader is asked to do something or avoid something, there should be a clear "call to action" in the conclusion.

Opinion pieces should not contradict or criticize Army or command policy; hold the Army or any of its members up to ridicule; take sides in political issues; hold any race, religion or ethnic group up to ridicule; violate host-country sensitivities; or be written to air personal complaints. (Of course, if you do any of these things, the article won't be printed.)

Clarity index

After you set your hook/bottom line into the first or second paragraph, it may be easiest to rough out a draft, then edit it carefully according to this style manual. You may fine-tune according to DA PAM 600-67's clarity index (Paragraph 4-3), which may be helpful in excising even more fat." This is a necessary process, as long words and long sentences make writing difficult to read. Not only does the long words/long sentences kind of writing fail to meet Army standards, but also your fellow Signaleers won't read your article if you don't make it clear, concise and relevant.

The clarity index is based on word and sentence length. To calculate a piece of writing's clarity, take a sample of 200 words or less, then:

- Count the number of sentences;
- Count the number of words;
- Divide the number of words by the number of sentences to get the average sentence length (target average is 15 words per sentence);
- Count the number of words that have three syllables or more;
- Divide the number of long words by the total of words to determine the percentage of long words (target is 15 percent);
- Add the average sentence length to the percentage of long words;

- The sum is the clarity index (target is 30).
DA PAM 600-67 has several examples of poor vs. good writing for practice and comparison.

Writer's guide to style (specific guidance)

Because guidance in this section is specific, it changes as common problems appear among articles submitted for publication. The first portion outlines specifically where **AC** style varies from Appendix B (style practices) of AR 25-50. AR 25-50 is first excerpted, then **AC** style is stated.

AC style variances from Appendix B, AR 25-50

Section I: Capitalization B-2. Titles of publications, documents, acts and so forth a. Capitalize all words in titles of publications and documents, except *a, an, the, at, by, for, in, of, on, to, up, and, as, but, if, or* and *nor*. b. Do not capitalize when used apart from titles or in a general sense.

AC is a "downstyle" publication. That means only the first word and proper nouns are capitalized in headlines (the article's title). For titles quoted within an article (articles, books, movies, operas, plays, poems, songs, television programs, lectures, speeches and works of art), follow the capitalization rules in AR 25-50 Appendix B, Paragraph B-2. There are two exceptions to the AR 25-50 guidance on capitalizing publications:

- Capitalize *a, an, the, at, by, for, in, of, on, to, up, and, as, but, if, or* and *nor* if any of these words are the first word of the headline.
- Two examples in AR 25-50 contain grammatical errors (Senate Document 70, but Senate bill 416 and House Resolution 68, but House bill 20). Capitalize a word (bill in this case) if a numeral is used after it; the presence of the numeral makes the entire phrase a proper noun (see "numerals" entry, **AP Stylebook**). Also applies if a single letter follows the word, as in Grade A, Ward D.

B-3. Titles used with names or titles standing for persons a. Capitalize titles preceding proper names. Do not capitalize when used in a general sense. b. Capitalize titles following proper names, or used alone as substitutes for names, when they indicate pre-eminence. Capitalize titles in the second person. Do not capitalize when used in a general sense or when not indicating pre-eminence.

AP Stylebook guidance agrees with *a* but disagrees with *b*, and therefore **AC** style follows the **AP Stylebook** on *b*. Capitalize a person's title only when used preceding one or more names (President Bush; Presidents Clinton and Bush). Lowercase in all other instances. Therefore most frequent usage is to lowercase: the president, the secretary of defense, the secretary of the Army. But: Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of the Army Thomas White. (Because these titles are long, it's more grammatically correct to say Donald Rumsfeld, secretary of defense, or Thomas White, secretary of the Army. Note that when set off by commas, the title is not capitalized! "Capitalization" entry in **AP Stylebook** has more information.)

Section II: Compound words B-5. Basic rules a. Omit the hyphen when words appear in regular order and the omission causes no confusion in sound or meaning. b. Compound two or more words to express an idea that would not be as clearly expressed in separate words. c. In a derivative of a compound, keep the solid or hyphenated form of the original compound, unless otherwise indicated for particular words. The style for compound modifiers (in the "hyphen" entry of **The AP Stylebook's** punctuation section) overrules this portion of Appendix B. **When a compound modifier -- two or more words that express a single concept -- precedes a noun, use hyphens to link all the words in the compound except the adverb very and all adverbs ending in -ly. Hyphenate to avoid duplicated vowels and tripled consonants: anti-intellectual, pre-empt, shell-like.**

- The examples listed in B-5 [a] stand as is except eye opener (should be eye-opener), life cycle (should be one word: lifecycle) and time frame (an Army jargon word and should not be used, but if used, should be one word: timeframe)
- Of the examples from B-5 [b], apply the particular rules for the prefix from **AP Stylebook**. For example, the prefix "in-" (see the "in-" entry in **AP Stylebook**) has no hyphen when "in-" means "not": inaccurate, insufferable. No hyphen for words like inbound, indoor, infield, infighting, inpatient, but hyphen for words like in-depth, in-group, in-house, in-law.
- Per the "year-end" entry in **AP Stylebook**, year-end is hyphenated.

B-6. Solid compounds No style changes specified from AR 25-50.

B-7. Unit modifiers Again, the style for compound modifiers (in the "hyphen" entry of **The AP**

Stylebook's punctuation section) overrules this portion of Appendix B. **When a compound modifier -- two or more words that express a single concept -- precedes a noun, use hyphens to link all the words in the compound except the adverb *very* and all adverbs ending in *ly*. Hyphenate to avoid duplicated vowels and tripled consonants: anti-intellectual, pre-empt, shell-like.**

- Place a hyphen between words or abbreviations and words combined to form a unit modifier immediately preceding the word modified, as outlined in Appendix B, AR 25-50.
- All examples in B-7 [b] are incorrect for **AC** usage; all should be hyphenated to comply with rules on compound modifiers.
- Of the first seven examples in B-7 [c], the first two are correct in Appendix B (adverbs end in *ly*), but the rest should be: unusually well-preserved specimen, very well-defined usage, very well-worth reading, not too-distant future, often-heard phrase. When a modifier that would be hyphenated before a noun occurs instead after a form of the verb "to be," retain the hyphen.
- Foreign phrases **are** hyphenated when used as a unit modifier, such as *prima-facie* evidence. (For example: *prima facie* is hyphenated when used as an adjective; see AP Stylebook "prima facie" entry.)

B-8. Prefixes, suffixes and combining forms *The AP Stylebook's* punctuation section and other entries overrule this portion of Appendix B.

- Use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel. De-emphasis, pre-existing and re-enact should be hyphenated, in variance with AR 25-50. (See the "pre-" and "re-" entries in the **AP Stylebook**.) There are a few exceptions to the AP Stylebook guidance, and they are noted in separate entries: cooperate and coordinate, for instance
- Use a hyphen if the word following the prefix is capitalized
- Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes: sub-subparagraph
- Use no hyphen for words that use the prefix "ex-" in the sense of "out of": excommunicate, expropriate. Hyphenate when using "ex-" in the sense of "former": ex-governor, ex-soldier, ex-trader. (See "ex-" entry in AP Stylebook.)
- Always hyphenate prefixes self- and quasi-.

B-9. Numerical compounds The hyphenation is correctly used, but numbers one through nine should be spelled out and 21 should be expressed as a numeral unless it starts a sentence. Thus: seven-hour day, six-footer, 10-minute delay, three-week vacation, 24-inch ruler, 21 (or Twenty-one if the start of a sentence). In B-9 [c], the guidance is to use figures for both numbers when two or more numbers appear in a sentence and one of them is 10 or higher -- do not do this; follow the style rules of one through nine spelled out.

B-10. Improvised compounds No style changes specified from AR 25-50.

Section III: Abbreviations B-11. General use of abbreviations Do write acronyms and abbreviations out in full on first appearance, but **do not** follow the word with the acronym/abbreviation in parentheses (**AP Stylebook**, "abbreviations and acronyms" entry) to avoid awkward constructions. Instead, provide an acronym/abbreviation list at the end of your article. If the acronym isn't clear on second use, spell the word/phrase out on each reference.

B-12. Capitals, hyphens, periods and spacing In general, use a period with an abbreviation but no periods with an acronym.

- An exception is c.o.d., which is an acronym for "cash on delivery" but is an exception per **The AP Stylebook** (also listed as c.o.d. in Appendix B, Paragraph B-12 [a])
- If the abbreviation is used in an address, it has a period ("addresses" entry, **Stylebook**); therefore St. would be proper rather than St as listed in Appendix B
- Also at variance with Appendix B is the journalistic practice of using no space after the periods between initials in a name -- thus it would be J.M. Jones rather than J. M. Jones
- The abbreviation is properly DoD rather than DOD since the o of the word of is not capitalized in the phrase Department of Defense

B-13. Geographic terms There is one important difference between *The AP Stylebook* and AR 25-50's Appendix B. In the **Stylebook** (and therefore it's **AC** style), *United States* is spelled out as a noun but abbreviated *U.S.* (note the periods; see "U.S." entry in Stylebook) as an adjective. Therefore the style should be: U.S. government, U.S. Congress, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. monitor Nantucket; Britain, France and U.S. governments (or British, French and American governments). Do not abbreviate Canal Zone, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands and names of the states of the United States unless used in an address.

B-14. Addresses Words such as *avenue*, *street*, *boulevard*, *drive* in an address are abbreviated (and use periods). Always spell out *fort*. Examples: 1611 John Ave., Bldg. 29808A

B-15. Parts of publications Do not abbreviate parts of publications unless used in a table. Provide a key or legend to your table which spells out the publication part. If used for a specific edition (Vol. 1 No. 1), then abbreviate, use periods and capitalize.

B-16. Terms relating to Congress Do not abbreviate.

B-17. Calendar divisions *The AP Stylebook* overrules AR 25-50 here. When a name of a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Spell out all month names when used alone or with a year alone. Examples: *Jan. 17* but *January 2002*. (See "months" entry, *AP Stylebook*.)

Do not abbreviate names of the days of the week unless used in a table. If used in a table, follow the abbreviation style in B-17 [b].

B-18. Quotes You should be wary of using long quotations in an article, but if you do, do not use the formulation QUOTE UNQUOTE as outlined in B-18 [a]. Long quotations are placed in quotation marks, but are paragraphed normally. When continuing a quotation from paragraph to paragraph, do not close the quote marks at the paragraph's end until you reach the very end of the quotation. Do, however, start each paragraph in the quotation with quote marks. (The quotation marks at the paragraph's beginning of course indicate a quotation, but the absence of them at the end of a paragraph indicates that the quotation continues.) See the "quotation marks" entry in *The AP Stylebook's* punctuation section. Punctuation rules on quotations (reference B-18 [b]), periods and commas are **always** within quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation mark go within quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. (They go outside the quotation marks when they apply to the whole sentence.)

B-19. Word division Do not manually divide words or set your word processor for automatic hyphenation. **AC's** desktop publishing system will divide words when necessary. Specific style guidance not specified in Appendix B, AR 25-50

A. Syntax

Write concisely. Avoid extra words – don't use two words to express an idea where one will do.

- Example: "in order to" – delete "in order"
- Example: "first of all" – delete "of all"
- Example: "future plans" – delete "future" ("plans" implies they are yet to happen)

Watch for noun modifiers in your writing – change them to verbs. Cue: prepositional phrases.

Watch for "Latinized suffixes" and get rid of them. Cues: "tion," "ment," "ize," "ility." These suffixes indicate noun modifiers and that the word may be larger than it needs to be. A Latinized suffix often means the word was a verb, but the suffix made the word a noun.

- Example: "The NCO is responsible for the motivation, development and supervision of his squad." Rewritten, this sentence should read: "The NCO motivates, develops and supervises his squad." The correction gives the sentence action verbs and gets rid of extra words, noun modifiers, "10-dollar words" and Latinized suffixes.
- Example: "Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must inevitably be taken into account." This example was provided, tongue-in-cheek, by George Orwell, who was rephrasing Ecclesiastes: "I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happens to them all." The Biblical version is pithier and communicates better.

B. Acronyms and abbreviations

Do not use any acronym on first reference, not even common acronyms. Spell them out the first time they appear in your article. Then use the acronym on second reference. Do not put acronyms in parentheses after the phrase they stand for. Provide an alphabetical list of acronyms and what they stand for to the editor.

Always spell out "battalion" and "brigade," whether used within a unit's name or as a generic reference.

- Example: 56th Signal Battalion
- Example: The brigade deployed.

Abbreviate Jr. or Sr. after someone's name. Do not place a comma before. Thus: John Doe Sr., not John Doe, Sr.

C. Capitalization

Army Communicator - Style Manual

Last Updated: 19 February 2016

Capitalize a title when used before a person's name, lowercase otherwise.

- Example: Secretary of the Army John Doe. John Doe, secretary of the Army.
- Example: Secretary of Defense John Doe. John Doe, secretary of defense. Or John Doe, defense secretary.

Capitalize the name of something only if it's unique. Signal equipment is not capitalized, but communications systems usually are.

- Example: mobile-subscriber equipment (there is more than one piece of this equipment and therefore it's not unique)
- Example: Joint Tactical Radio System (there is only one system by this name and therefore it is capitalized)

D. Apostrophes

Do not use to make plurals. Examples: 30s, MOSs. Exception for single-letter plurals: P's and Q's.

E. Numbers

Ages and percents are always in figures. Thus: 5-year-old boy, 9 percent.

Spell out one through nine otherwise. 10 and above use numerals. Exception: start of a sentence, then spell out 10 and above.

F. Educational degrees

Use apostrophes: bachelor's degree, master's degree.

Do not say that the degree is a bachelor of science, just bachelor's degree.

Do not capitalize the names of degrees unless a proper noun.

- Example: bachelor's degree in English.
- Example: master's degree in telecommunications.

G. Common word goofs

- Adviser, not advisor.
- Ax, not axe.
- Spell without "e": acknowledgment, judgment.
- Affect, effect: affect, as a verb, means to influence. Affect as a noun best avoided; it is occasionally used in psychology but not in everyday language. Effect, as a verb, means to cause. Effect as a noun means result.
- More than, over: "over" is a physical position. When dealing with numbers, use "more than" -- such as "more than 90 percent" (not "over 90 percent").
- Compose, comprise, constitute: compose means to create or put together. Commonly used in both active and passive voices. Comprise means to contain, to include all or embrace. Use only in active voice. Constitute, in the sense of form or makeup, is used if neither compose nor comprise fit.
- Include: use when what follows is part of the total. Do not use "etc." at the sentence's end.

Example:
job includes
sizing
photograph
for the
magazine
layout. N
My job
includes
sizing
photograph
etc.
- Amok, not amuck.
- Among, between: "Between" introduces two items, "among" more than two. "Between" is the correct word when expressing the relationships of three or more items considered one pair at a time: "Negotiations on a contract are underway between the Signal Regiment and Motorola, Raytheon and Qualcomm." Pronouns following "among" or "between" must be in the objective case: among us, between him and her, between you and me.
- Dimensions: use figures and spell out inches, feet, yards, etc., to indicate depth, height, length and width. Hyphenate adjectival forms before nouns. Use an apostrophe to indicate feet and quote marks to indicate inches (5'6") only in very technical contexts.

Examples: He is 5 feet 6 inches tall; the 5-foot-6-inch man; the 5-foot man; the basketball team signed a 7-footer.

Examples: The car is 17 feet long, 6 feet wide and 5 feet high. The rug is 9 feet by 12 feet; the 9-by-12-foot rug.

Example: The storm left 5 inches of snow.

- Ensure, insure: Use “ensure” to mean guarantee (“Steps were taken to ensure accuracy”); use “insure” only for references to insurance (“The policy insures his life”).
- Who, that, which: When an essential or non-essential phrase or clause refers to an animal with a name or to a human being, introduce the phrase or clause with “who” or “whom.” (Do not use commas if the clause is essential to the sentence’s meaning; use them if it is not.) “That” is the preferred pronoun to introduce clauses that refer to an inanimate object or an animal without a name. “Which” is the only acceptable pronoun to introduce a non-essential clause that refers to an inanimate object or an animal without a name. “Which” may occasionally be substituted for “that” in introducing an essential clause that refers to an inanimate object or an animal without a name. In general, this use of “which” should appear only when “that” is used as a conjunction to introduce another clause in the same sentence: “He said Monday that the part of the Army which suffered severe casualties needs reinforcement.”

H. Names

Refer to people on first reference by their full name: rank if military, first name, last name. On second reference, by last name only, regardless of rank or gender.